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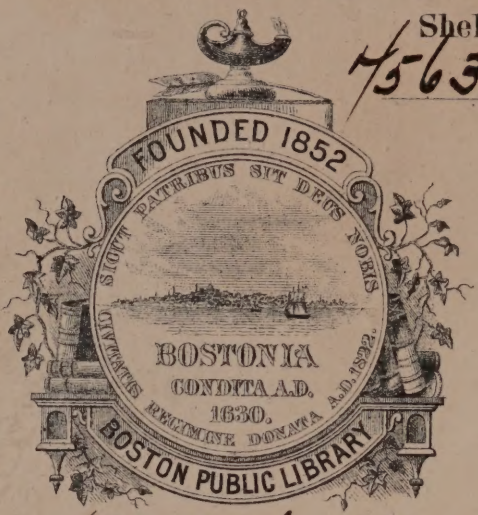

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"To receive and collect funds for the relief of poor and decayed Brethren, their widows, or children."—From *The Charter*, 1770.

ORIGIN AND MANAGEMENT

OF THE

CHARITY FUND

OF

MASSACHUSETTS LODGE,

FROM ITS FORMATION IN 1810 TO 1880.

BY

HENRY J. PARKER,

(PAST MASTER.)

T. R. MARVIN & SON, PRINTERS, BOSTON.

1880.

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AT the Annual Meeting of MASSACHUSETTS LODGE, December, 1878, the Board of Trustees, which previous to that time had consisted of five members elected annually, was reduced to three to serve three years, the term of one member to expire annually. By request of his associates, the Secretary of the new board was requested to prepare a sketch of the history of the Charity Fund, to be presented to the Lodge at the Annual Meeting in 1879. It was soon evident that a proper report would occupy more time and labor than was anticipated; and it was suggested, that as few of the present members of the Lodge had any knowledge of its origin and subsequent history, a printed report would not only be of value, but might tend to awaken an interest in a trust which should be the pride of every member of the Lodge. How wisely our predecessors in this Lodge laid the foundations of this Charity Fund, and with laudable pride watched its increase, the following pages will show.

It has been the aim of the compiler to let the records tell their own story, simply arranging the extracts in chronological order; and where the occasion seemed to warrant, the reports are given in full.

H. J. P.

THE CHARITY FUND

OF

MASSACHUSETTS LODGE.

IT will be seventy years in April, 1880, since the first steps were taken, looking to the formation of a Charity Fund in the MASSACHUSETTS LODGE. These steps were taken with caution and much deliberation, but when the plan was once decided upon, the Brethren adopted it unanimously and took active measures for its increase. To the character of the Brethren called to manage this trust, its success is in no small degree due. The wisest and most discreet were selected for the duty, and to it they freely gave their best endeavors, while the long continued years of service of the various Treasurers of the Fund is sufficient evidence that the confidence of the Brethren has not been misplaced.

The first allusion to a Charity Fund in the records is found under date of April 10, 1810, and is as follows :— "The propriety and utility of instituting a Fund for

Charity being suggested by one of the members, it was voted, on motion of Brother Michael Roulstone, that a Committee, consisting of W. Bros. Job Drew, Matthew S. Parker, and Robert Barber, and Bros. Michael Roulstone, and Asa Page, take into consideration and report a plan upon which such a fund may be established with success, next Lodge night."

At the meeting in May, two Brethren were added to their number at the request of the Committee, and in June the Committee submitted a lengthy report, giving their favorable opinion, and reporting a plan which they had agreed to recommend. "But the Lodge being thin," (so the record reads,) "it was put over to next Lodge night," July 30th, when after considerable debate, the plan was unanimously adopted, substantially as reported by the Committee. It was the opinion of this Committee, "That such a fund would be promotive of the happiness of our Society, inasmuch as it will tend to attach more firmly the members to the general interest of the Lodge and to each other, and add to the respectability of our institution, inasmuch as it will enable us to contribute more bountifully for the relief of misfortune and distress, and will direct our attention to real objects of charity; * * * as our wishes are to comply with our duty in doing all the good in our power; and our ability to mitigate existing sorrows and ward off approaching evils, will by such a fund be increased."

The By-Laws which were submitted by the Committee are quite full, but the following synopsis covers all the principal points.

Art. 1 provides: "As our funds amount at this time to Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars, to set apart Three Hundred Dollars for the establishment of a Charity,

and on its being established, each member of the Lodge to pay into the hands of the Treasurer One Dollar for the purpose of increasing said fund. One Dollar of the amount received for each initiation to be put in the said fund, and each Brother admitted a member of the Lodge, hereafter, to pay in addition to the usual fee, Five Dollars into the Charity Fund; and all donations to the Lodge to be put into said fund, until it shall amount to One Thousand Dollars, and in no case shall said fund be divided or diminished except by vote of every member of the Lodge." Provision was made for the appointment of a Committee "to be intrusted with the management of the fund." They were authorized "to receive applications for loans from the members of the Lodge in writing; to examine into the responsibility of the applicant and the security he offers, and if satisfied with the necessity of the applicant, the Committee were to have full power to make such loans, not exceeding One Hundred Dollars, to any one member, and for a term not exceeding one year." As vouchers for said loans a note was required, signed by the applicant as principal, with two good securities with him, the note to be made payable to the Treasurer of the fund on demand, with interest quarterly, "and in all respects the Committee were enjoined to act impartially and for the greatest good of the Lodge and of the members at all times."

The Committee were to "choose one from among their number, to act as Treasurer, whose duty it shall be to receipt to the Treasurer of the Lodge for all monies received of him, to keep a fair record of all monies received, of all loans made, and of all transactions relating to said Charity Fund in a book suitable for that purpose, and to keep it in such a manner, as

that his successor, or any other member of the Lodge, may easily comprehend its contents; and likewise to pay out all monies on loans, agreeably to vote of Committee, and to pay out the interest received for loans agreeably to vote of the Lodge."

It was further provided, "That the Brother receiving the loan should pay the interest quarterly, and the principal at the end of the year, to the end that some other Brother may have an opportunity for a like accommodation; but at the end of the year, if the Committee saw fit, it could be renewed for another year, the note to be made payable on demand, though it was not expected to be paid till the end of the year if the security held good."

"Members of fair standing in society were eligible as Committee men, except the Standing Committee on accounts, whose other duties would interfere with the duties of this Committee."

"All monies received for interest of the Charity Fund were to be given to those persons whom the Lodge thinks most deserving of our charity, and in such sums and at such times as may to the Lodge seem best."

Aug. 27. "Proceeded to vote for the Committee on Charity, and on counting the ballots they were found unanimously for Brethren Thomas Redman, Jonathan Whitney, Ebenezer Adams, Michael Roulstone, and Elias Haskell."

November 11. "It was voted that the Committee of the Charity Fund have liberty to choose a Secretary."

Dec. 31. "Josiah Calef withdrawing his membership, and enclosing Twenty Dollars as a donation to the Charity Fund was received," for which the thanks of the Lodge were voted.

The first report of the Committee submitted to the Lodge, appears under date of December 31, 1811, by which it appeared that the funds at that time amounted to $522.34; of this amount, $238 was due from the Lodge, and considered as a loan drawing interest.

July 22nd, 1813, "Bro. Thomas Redman, P. M. informed the Lodge that he had received from the hand of R. W. Bro. Andrew Sigourney,* the sum of Two Dollars and fifty cents, as the proportion of Massachusetts Lodge for sundry glass ware sold by him belonging to Masons' Hall,† which amount was Voted to the Charity Fund."

At the Annual Meeting in 1814, the Committee reported the state of the fund to be $572.54, consisting of four loans of $100 each, balance due from the Lodge on interest of $123.70, and $6 due from fees.

It was voted Feb. 24th, 1815, "That the Committee of the Charity Fund be authorized and empowered to continue the loan to the Lodge of so much of the balance due said Fund as amounts to One Hundred Dollars. It was also Voted, "That Bro. Peter Osgood, Treasurer of the Lodge, be authorized and requested to endorse over on behalf of the Lodge and on their responsibility, the note signed by R. W. Job Drew, (W. M.) payable to said Osgood, as aforesaid, and dated this day for $100, to the Treasurer of the Charity

* Andrew Sigourney was Grand Treasurer from 1810 to 1820.

† Masons' Hall, for many years occupied by the Lodge, in common with other Lodges, was situated on Ann, now North Street. The building now stands, it being the third from Union Street. The arched windows of its fourth story may serve to designate the temple where our fathers in Masonry assembled for many years, and the plaster ornaments and the arched ceiling show that it was once an elegant room for the times. An interesting account of this, as well as of the other Halls occupied by the Lodge, can be found in the able History of Columbian Lodge by R. W. John T. Heard.

Fund, and deliver the same to him as collateral security for the loan above mentioned, and take proper vouchers therefor."

In November the Treasurer of the Lodge was authorized "to endorse over on the responsibility of the Lodge a note of ($15.00,) Fifteen Dollars, to the Treasurer of the Fund as a donation."

At the Annual Meeting of this year, the Committee reported, "That the amount due from the Lodge had all been paid, and that the fund then amounted to $670.89, all of which is vested stocks and bears interest." "The fund had been increased during the year from fees and interest $98.35, and should the Lodge continue prosperous, it will be but a few years before it will derive all the advantages contemplated. In the present condition of the fund, your Committee cannot forbear to express that they feel proud that our beloved Lodge has in so short a time been able to realize so respectable and honorable amount, and we believe every member will reciprocate the same sentiment."

Appended to the record of the evening is the following: "Just as the Lodge was closing, the Secretary discovered on the floor a One Dollar bill, which no one appearing to claim, was voted to the Charity Fund."

Aug. 30, 1816. Five dollars which had been paid to the Secretary for degrees, and the applicant never having been ballotted for, or applied for his deposit, was disposed of in the same manner. In December, 1816, the fund, under the careful management of the Committee, had reached the sum of $783.51. In their report, the Committee suggested "That the fund might have increased more rapidly, if they had the power to invest in public stocks." Agreeable to their request, "It was voted that the Committee have discretionary

power, in case the money is not applied for, pursuant to the former regulation of the fund, and good security offered, to invest the same in such manner in public stocks or otherwise, as shall be most for the interest of the Lodge and increase of the fund."

In 1817, the matter of revising the regulations relating to the Charity Fund was brought before the Lodge. The increase of the fund rendered it necessary to adopt regulations for its permanent management. At the meeting in April new By-Laws were adopted for that purpose. The wisdom of the new regulations is apparent from the fact, that from their adoption in 1817 to 1878 they were substantially unchanged.

SEC. 1 provided for the increase and care of the fund. One Dollar was to be paid for each initiate, and Five Dollars for each member admitted. All grants and donations were to be made over to the fund.

SEC. 2. The fund was to be under the management of Five Trustees, to be chosen by ballot at the annual election from among the members of the Lodge, all of whom were eligible, except the Master and Wardens for the time being.

SEC. 3, provided for the election of a Treasurer other than the Treasurer of the Lodge, and a Secretary.

At the Annual Meeting in December they were to exhibit "a true account of the state of the fund, and the several sums expended in charitable purposes, stating to whom they have been bestowed, the neglect of which duty shall render them ineligible for the next year."

SEC. 4 and 5 provided for the investment in loans as formerly, as also in public stocks.

SEC. 6 was as follows: "Whenever said fund shall have accumulated to One Thousand Dollars, the increase from the interest shall be subject to be appropriated in

charity for the relief of poor and distressed Masons, or their widows and orphans, but the principal of said fund shall never be diminished, and every balance of interest remaining on hand at the end of the year shall be added to the principal."

SEC. 7 provided for the disbursement of charity. The Trustees could expend an amount not exceeding Ten Dollars on any one applicant. If there was no money on hand, the case to be reported to the Lodge, with their opinion of the merits of the case. "And the members of the Lodge are enjoined to assist the Committee in rendering all charitable donations as extensively serviceable to the real wants of those on whom they are bestowed, as may be, to which end it is expected that no member will make any demand of such persons for recompense for personal services, except for labor, nor receive for this, nor any article he may furnish to them, any greater price than shall be sufficient to prevent him from suffering loss. And as those who now or have been members of the Lodge will have contributed a larger proportion than other Masons for the establishment of this fund, they shall be considered as having superior claims to its benefits."

SEC. 8 provides that "The regulations respecting this fund shall not be altered or amended, except a majority of all the members shall be present, and then by a unanimous vote."

The close of this year was to prove the realization of the hopes of the Brethren as to a permanent foundation for the Charity Fund.

November 28. "On motion of R. W. Job Drew, it was voted, that the sum of Ninety Dollars be granted from the funds of this Lodge, as a donation to the Charity Fund, in order to complete the sum of One

Thousand Dollars, and that the Treasurer of the Lodge be directed to pay said sum of Ninety Dollars to the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Charity Fund in Massachusetts Lodge."

The Annual Report of the Trustees, submitted at the December meeting, is of sufficient interest to warrant its insertion in full.

"The Board of Trustees of the Charity Fund in Massachusetts Lodge asked leave to make their annual report of the state of said fund, viz: By their Annual Report, accepted Dec. 27, 1816, it appears that the whole amount of the fund at that time was $783 51

That the fund has been increased from initiates and membership the past year,	$82 00	
Interest on Loans,	47 04	
Donations,	96 00	225 04
Making a total of		$1,008 55
Of which sum there has been invested in the purchase of public stocks pursuant to the By-Laws,	$1,002 10	
Leaving a balance of Cash on hand,	6 45	1,008 55

The above sum has been invested, viz: —

M. Roulstone, note with securities, dated Oct. 26, 1817,	$100	cost	$100
Loan to the Lodge, with J. Drew's note as collateral security,	100	"	100
E. Haskell and Jona. Whitney's note, dated Oct. 11, 1817,	86	"	86
2 shares in the Manufacturers' and Mechanics' Bank,	100	"	100

Certificate of U. S. 6% Stock, No. 156, dated July 10, 1816, .	$200 cost	$168
Do. 7% Stock, No. 3442, dated April 22, 1817, ...	200 "	202
Do. 6% Stock, No. 75, dated Dec. 3, 1817, ...	230 "	246.10
Total nominal amount,	$1,016 cost	$1,002.10

"Thus giving a nominal gain of $13.90: but the real value of said stock in the market is much more, being worth at this time $49.90 more than the actual cost.

"Your Committee would also state, that from the manner in which the above sum of $1,002.10 has been invested, it will yield $62.90 income from interest the approaching year, to be disposed of in charity, being more than 6 per cent on the whole stock.

"This fund was instituted July 30, 1810, when the Lodge appropriated the sum of Three Hundred Dollars from their funds to commence its foundation, and on the 27th of August the first Committee was chosen to take charge of the management thereof; little was done, however, towards the investment of the fund until the 26th of July, 1813, when a thorough investigation of said fund took place; since which time, by the united exertions of the different Committees to whom it has been entrusted, and the fostering care and patronage of the Lodge, it has been rapidly increasing. It was calculated by the Committee, July 26, 1813, that it would take six years and ten months at least before One Thousand Dollars could possibly be accumulated, yet its increase has been so rapid, that the most sanguine expectations of all have been exceeded, and we find in short of four years and five months (less than

two-thirds of the original calculations) it has grown to maturity, and is capable of administering essentially to the comfort and relief of the distressed, while it reflects more honor on the Lodge than any other event since its foundation.

"It is also worthy of remark that only Four Hundred and Thirty-one Dollars has ever been taken from the other funds of the Lodge, or raised by tax upon the members; therefore if this fund had never been established, that sum only would now constitute the amount of our funds; hence we may justly say, the Lodge have enriched themselves by creating this establishment more than Six Hundred Dollars, in short of four years and one-half.

"The Lodge after first of January ensuing commence receiving the full benefit of the establishment, and your Committee doubt not each member will feel an honorable pride in watching over its interests, and will entrust it to the care and management of those only who will faithfully guard the same trust. Your Committee hope it will never fall into the hands of the careless, indifferent or wasteful, but may continue to increase and extend our means of doing good.

"The Committee have thought proper on this occasion to make a full statement of the origin, progress and present state of said fund, as the occasion appeared to require it, and they confidently believe their conduct will meet the appreciation of the Lodge.

"All which is respectfully submitted.

ELIAS HASKELL, Z. G. WHITMAN,
MATT. S. PARKER, PLINY HAYES.
JONA. JEWETT,

"*Board of Trustees of the Charity Fund of Mass. Lodge.*"

"BOSTON, Dec. 25, 1817.

1818, Nov. 27th. "Voted, that the balance remaining in W. Bro. Z. G. Whitman's hands, $14.12, being the proceeds of tickets disposed of at the last Installation of Officers, after paying the expenses of that evening, be presented to the Charity Fund as a donation."

At the Annual Meeting in 1818 the fund had increased to $1,118.19, and the succeeding year to $1,239.78.

In 1819, April 30, a communication was received from a Convention of the Committees on Charity from the several Masonic Societies in Boston, requesting authority to form a "Board" for the relief of strangers in distress, which was referred to a Committee, who recommend in a report made June 11th: —

"That in their opinion it will greatly diminish the annual expense of Massachusetts Lodge, by granting power to the Trustees on Charity to form a part of the Board proposed for the relief of strangers."

Your Committee therefore recommend, that the Trustees on Charity be duly authorized to connect themselves and act with the "Board," so far as they can do it without violating the By-Laws, which recommendation was unanimously adopted. On the 30th, the Lodge received the "Rules and Regulations" adopted by the Convention for their Government.*

* The Boston Masonic Board of Relief was organized in 1819, and was composed of representatives of the different Masonic bodies meeting in the city. All applications for charity from sojourners were referred to this Board, who assessed the expenses *pro rata* on the several bodies represented. The first record book of the Board contains the following inscription: "An abstract of the proceedings of the Boston Masonic Board of Relief, Sir Henry Purkett, its first president, showing the number of donations, amount paid by each institution represented, and the total amount granted in each month and year, and in the whole term up to the close of each succeeding year; also, the names of the presidents, secretaries and treasurers, from the formation of the Board in August, A.D. 1819."

From 1819 to 1833 the Board of Relief received and disbursed $7,448.09. The organization was continued until 1870, when it appears to have ceased from lack of

At the Annual Meeting in 1829, nineteen years from the formation of the fund, it had increased to $1,555, and the year following to $1,680.41. By the report of this year, the invested fund was as follows, viz : —

4 shares of North Bank, ...	$400 00
13 shares Manufacturers' and Mechanics' B'k,	650 00
3 shares American Bank, ...	300 00
Sundry loans to the Lodge, ...	132 43
Note, with securities, ...	100 00
Cash on hand uninvested, ...	97 98
	$ 1,680 41

Dark days were coming upon the Lodge, and the fund which had been carefully tended was to suffer a great decrease. Up to this time, the Lodge had not only promptly answered all calls for charity from its own members, but had faithfully contributed its quota to the "Board of Relief." The dividends on the Bank stock, which had been to this time profitable investments, continued to decrease, and little was ultimately realized by the trustees in the Manufacturers' and Mechanics' and the American Banks ; by order of Congress, the United States Certificates had been redeemed.

The Anti-Masonic *furore* which raged over the country curtailed and finally stopped the work of the Lodge. In this crisis of affairs, resort was had to the Charity Fund for support. First, the interest of the

interest. There can be little doubt that the plan originally adopted by this organization was the wisest in dispensing the charities of the First District. All the various institutions were represented and contributed to its funds, and had a common interest in its proper disbursement. At present the whole burden of assisting sojourning Brethren is borne entirely by the Grand Lodge, — a burden neither just or equitable.

invested funds was paid over to the Lodge, and finally, the principal was materially reduced ; it was impossible to collect a large amount of the dues belonging to the Lodge, and no resource was left but the Charity Fund. It was painful to see the work of years dwindling away, but having the good of Masonry at heart, the Brethren resolved faithfully and at all hazards to stand by the Charter of the Lodge. How faithfully in those troubled times the Brethren struggled almost against hope, and how much we, their successors, are indebted to them for our existence as a Lodge, few of this day probably realize. The manner in which they met the emergency, the following votes will show.

1829, March 27. It was "Voted, that the Treasurer of this Lodge be authorized to borrow from the Board of Trustees of the Charity Fund any sum of money not exceeding Fifty Dollars."

"Voted, that Sec. 6, Art. 13, be altered so as to read, 'and every balance of interest remaining on hand at the end of the year shall be paid over to the Treasurer of the Lodge for the use thereof, with the exception of Twenty Dollars, which sum the Trustees shall reserve to meet any emergencies.'"

"Which vote (the record reads) was unanimous."

To lessen the expenses of the Lodge, it was voted, (at the meeting of June 26th,) to discontinue the Sodality Meetings.

At the same meeting, "the Treasurer of the Lodge reported that the Trustees of the Charity Fund had refused to loan him the sum he was authorized to borrow of them." The reasons for refusal are given in full in the report of the Trustees in March following.

"Voted, and chose R. W. Zachariah G. Whitman, R. W. A. A. Dame and R. W. Enoch Hobart, a Com-

mittee, to devise ways and means of raising some money to pay the debts of the Lodge."

1830, Feb. 26, R. W. Bro. Zachariah G. Whitman* delivered an address "On the principles of Masonry, and against the excitement of Anti-Masonry, with a comparison of characters in the leading men of both."

"Voted, That the Treasurer be directed to sell all the old jewels of Past Masters in his possession to the best advantage."

At the annual visitation, Oct. 29, there were present 11 Officers, 4 Past Masters, 3 other members, and 10 visitors.

Dec. 10. Voted, That the Treasurer of the Lodge be authorized to call on the Trustees of the Charity Fund for the loan of $47.98.

1831, March 25th, the Lodge again "Voted, That the Treasurer be authorized to call on the Trustees of the Charity Fund for a loan of One Hundred Dollars for the use of the Lodge."

June 24th, the Trustees submitted a long report, in which the claims of the Lodge upon the Charity Fund were carefully and impartially presented. The justice of their argument was admitted by the Brethren, in adopting the same by a unanimous vote. The report is here given in full.

"The Trustees of the Charity Fund in Massachusetts Lodge having received an application from the Lodge, through the Treasurer, for a loan of One Hundred Dollars, have felt very desirous of making the loan asked for, if it could be done without violating the trust reposed in them by that part of the By-Laws which

* W. Bro. Zachariah G. Whitman, one of our Past Masters, delivered the first historical address before the Lodge. He was a lawyer by profession, and was for many years clerk of the A. and H. Artillery Co., and was the author of the valuable History of the corps, which is even now referred to as a standard authority.

regulates the Charity Fund. It is thought by the Trustees that they do not possess the power to loan any part of the principal of the Charity Fund, unless satisfactory security is given for the money borrowed. It is not pretended that the Lodge in its said capacity can give any security for the money which they hope to obtain from the Charity Fund; and therefore, if a loan is made to the Lodge, it must be done without security.

"It seems to have been the intention of the framers of the article relating to the Charity Fund, to place the principal of the fund in such a condition that it should not be disturbed except by the unanimous consent of a majority of the members of the Lodge, at a meeting regularly called for that purpose. Now, if the Lodge have the right on application, by a vote thereof, to receive or obtain any part of the principal of the fund, it follows, we think, of course, that the whole of the Charity Fund may in like manner be withdrawn, and this might be done too by the consent of not more than three members of the Lodge. For example, suppose that at a regular meeting of the Lodge, five members only being present, a motion should be made to obtain a loan from the Charity Fund, and that the motion should be adopted by a majority of one, two voting in the negative, would not the consent of three members only in the case supposed obtain the loan, provided the Lodge have the power to obtain the money from the Charity Fund by a vote thereof. For if the Trustees have the power to loan the Lodge on their application therefor, it is hardly to be presumed that any Board of Trustees would think it proper to refuse the loan. We are therefore not inclined to the opinion that any member of Massachusetts Lodge

would be willing to have the Charity Fund held by a tenure so frail and feeble, as it would be, were such the construction put upon this Article of the By-Laws."

"The permanent fund in Dec. 10, 1830, amounted to Sixteen Hundred and Eighty Dollars, $^{4}/_{100}$, of which One Hundred and Thirty-two Dollars $^{43}/_{100}$ was due to the Lodge; the sum of Forty-seven Dollars $^{98}/_{100}$ has since been paid to the Treasurer of the Lodge, which leaves at the present time the sum of Fifteen Hundred Dollars. The Trustees of the Charity Fund believing it to be of importance to the usefulness and harmony of the Lodge, that the existing debt should be liquidated and paid, would respectfully suggest the expediency of amending the article in the By-Laws of the Lodge, touching the Charity Fund, so as to reduce the principal of said fund to the sum of Fourteen Hundred Dollars."

"All which is respectfully submitted.

ELIAS HASKELL, D. L. GIBBENS,
WM. REED, A. A. DAME.
ENOCH HOBART,

"*Trustees of the Charity Fund of Mass. Lodge.*"

"June 24, 1831.

"Voted unanimously, the By-Laws be so far altered, that the amount of the Charity Fund shall not hereafter be reduced below Fourteen Hundred Dollars.

"A majority of the members present."

From this time the income from the permanent fund was regularly paid over to the Treasurer of the Lodge, the Trustees reserving Twenty Dollars for Charity. In the report for 1834, the Trustees congratulated the Lodge "that this good *Step-mother* of our institution is so prolific, that she not only goes into the highways to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, but by her silent

industry and frugality she nearly supports the whole family." In 1839, owing to the failure of the American Bank, the principal was reduced to $1,325, and the following year to $1,200, and in 1842 the Trustees in their annual report stated the fund had been reduced to $980.

At the Annual Meeting in 1843, the following Circular from the Boston Masonic Board of Relief was received : —

" At a regular meeting of the Boston Masonic Board of Relief, held at the Masonic Temple, on Monday evening, Oct. 2, 1843, it was unanimously voted, that a copy of the following circular be presented to each institution represented at said Board, to wit : Whereas, the increased number of applicants for relief at said Board have been so great during the current year, that their funds for the whole year are nearly expended and an inclement season approaching, during which applications for relief will be made, which we as Masons cannot reject :—

" Therefore the prayer of said ' Board ' is, that you will be pleased to enable us to discharge our obligations to worthy Masons in a manner creditable to the institution we here represent in the cause of humanity.

" Respectfully submitted.

" Attest, W. C. MARTIN, *Sec'y.*

" Masonic Temple, Oct. 3, 1843."

Nov. 27, 1847. The By-Laws relating to the Charity Fund were amended, by striking out the portions providing for the increase of the Charity Fund from initiates' and members' fees, and also the section which

provided that the By-Laws relating to the fund could not be altered or amended without there be present a majority of the members, and by a unanimous vote; as the Committee stated in their report recommending the alterations, "these provisions have become a dead letter, an obsolete idea, and should therefore no longer remain as a part of the By-Laws."

The Trustees in their annual report to the Lodge, reported the total amount of their invested fund, at that time, January, 1848, as $548, the lowest point the fund has ever reached. From this time the affairs of the Lodge continued to prosper. Under the able and skillful management of the late R. W. George G. Smith, then Master, new life and energy were infused into the Lodge, its work increased and the finances improved.

The invested fund at this date consisted of the following, viz: —

4 shares in the Tremont Bank, .	$400 00
2 shares in the Market Bank, .	140 00
	$540 00

Feb. 27, 1853. A communication was received from the "Board of Relief," asking that "the annual donation from this Lodge be increased from Thirty Dollars, as it has heretofore been, to the sum of Fifty Dollars."

Voted, That the annual donation to the Board of Relief be increased to Fifty Dollars.

The Lodge up to 1852 had drawn from the Charity Fund, principal and interest, $1,500 for its expenses. At one time the income of the Lodge was so much reduced, that the entire expenses of the year, including rent of hall, was paid from this fund.

From 1853 to 1861 the principal of the fund had increased from $609 to $1,100. In 1861 the Lodge borrowed $200, which was repaid in 1863. The large number of candidates during the war, caused a large increase in the work of the Lodge, and consequent increase of its funds.

At the Annual Meeting in 1859, R. W. Brother Abraham A. Dame submitted a vote, "That the share of stock purchased by the Treasurer the past year be added to the Charity Fund." W. Brother Thomas G. Whytal offered an amendment, "That $30 in addition be added from the funds of the Lodge." "to which a further amendment was offered by Bro. Borrowscale, adding $50 more, so that the sum added to the fund be $200, which was carried, thereby increasing the principal to $1,056."

It will always be a matter of regret, that under the favorable prospects of the Lodge, a larger amount had not been laid up for a *rainy day*, which was near at hand. On the 5th of April, 1865, the Winthrop House was burned, and the Masonic Fraternity, occupying the upper portion of the building, suffered severe losses; the replacing of the property of the Lodge, and the expenses incident to removal, interfered seriously with its prosperity. Other matters of a more serious nature, relating to the internal affairs of the Lodge, disturbed its harmony and virtually suspended its work.

In 1865, the Lodge borrowed of the Charity Fund $1,000 to meet its obligations. The whole amount was repaid with interest in 1867. Since then the principal has gradually increased until the present time.

At the Annual Meeting in 1879, the Trustees submitted their annual report, by which the permanent investment is stated as follows, viz: —

United States 4% Bonds, . . .	$1,900 00
3 shares in the First National Bank, . .	300 00
2 shares in the Tremont Bank, . . .	200 00
Cash in the Mercantile Inst. for Savings, .	244 67
Cash on hand, ...	62 32
	$2,706 99

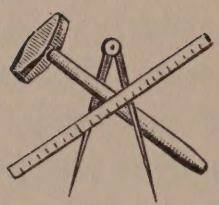
Owing to the financial depression of the past few years, the numerous Masonic bodies have, in common with the rest of the community, suffered severely ; the heavy expenses consequent on the large debt of the Temple, (now happily nearing an end,) has been a severe drain on the financial resources of the Lodge. As in former emergencies, the Charity Fund have been drawn upon for the deficit. From 1868 to 1878 the Lodge has borrowed $960 from the Trustees, $160 of which has since been paid.

By vote of the Lodge, this sum was finally taken from the principal of the fund. Since its formation, the Lodge has taken from the permanent investments of the fund in all about $2,500. With increasing prosperity, and the lessened expenses which are to follow the reduction of the Grand Lodge debt, the Brethren will cheerfully contribute towards placing the fund on a permanent and secure basis.

Massachusetts Lodge has never been niggardly in her charities. She has contributed annually to the Masonic Board of Relief, furnishing her proportion with her sister Lodges. No worthy Brother has ever been turned away empty-handed from her doors. During the troublesome times of Anti-Masonry, the Lodge set apart each year Twenty Dollars of the income of the Charity Fund, to be used for the relief of the distressed,

and as the record expresses it, "the hat went round" when more was needed for some worthy applicant.

In the language of the Trustees, in their report of 1817, "We doubt not that each member will feel an honorable pride in watching over its interests, and will entrust it to the care and management of those only who will faithfully guard the same trust, and that it will never fall into the hands of the careless, indifferent or wasteful, but may continue to increase and extend our means of doing good."



TREASURERS OF THE CHARITY FUND.

Thomas Redman, 1812.
Zachariah G. Whitman, 1813 to 1817.
Elias Haskell, 1818.
Galen Holmes, 1819 to 1826, and 1834 to 1836.
Daniel L. Gibbens, 1826 to 1833, and 1840 to 1852.
Henry H. Barton, 1837 to 1840.
Enoch Hobart, 1852 to 1864.
William Read, 1864 and 1865.
John Borrowscale, 1865 to 1868.
Alexander K. Bryer, 1868.

PRESENT ORGANIZATION.

Alexander K. Bryer, Treasurer, elected 1878 for 3 years, term expires in 1881.

Henry J. Parker, Secretary, elected 1878 for 2 years, term expires in 1880.

Edmund B. Vannevar, elected 1879 for 3 years, term expires in 1882.